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5 August 1947

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Subject: The Press in Czechoslovakia
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1. The Press in Czechoslovakia during the Occupation. After the Munich Pact, numerous journalists were interned in concentration camps and many others took refuge abroad. The Czech press was strictly controlled by the Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, who made all decisions on the importation of news, regulated the writing and censorship of all articles. Articles of a military character were subject to military as well as political censorship. The only newspapermen who could practice their profession were those few who collaborated with the Germans. The Resistance Movement eventually began the publication of clandestine newspapers which represented the people's only source of news from the outside world after their short wave radio reception was prohibited by the Germans.
2. Press Conditions Since the Liberation. Since the Liberation and the liquidation of the few collaborationist journalists, the Ministry of Information has charge of the press and its various problems. Newspapers cannot exist under private ownership because they are considered to have a public mission to fulfill which would be jeopardized by the element of personal interest inherent in private ownership. Thus the press can be the property only of the political parties, of the ministries and of political institutions. Some exceptions have been made in favor of scientific and art magazines. Theoretically, there is no censorship and each newspaperman can write what he wishes; however, as the Ministry of Information furnishes the information in an "adapted" form, the articles are written on subjects furnished. The journalists are members of the National Union of Czech Journalists, an organization which was established many years ago. Today the Union is under the control of the Communists, although there are leaders of the other political organizations in positions of leadership in the Union. The Ministry of Information, after consultation with the

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Union of Journalists, grants or denies authorization for the publication of new magazines or newspapers. The newspapermen of the People's Party complain among themselves, not of direct coercion, but of discrimination through insufficient newsprint supplied to them, delay in certain types of news, the tendentious character of the radio, and of the facilities which the Communists and certain national unions controlled by the Communists have for the obtention of newsprint.

3. The Newspapers in Czechoslovakia. Before the War, there were some 2,500 newspapers and magazines published in this Republic of fifteen million inhabitants. In January 1940, there were 1,700. The Government, realizing that the newspapers of the pre-war period were not satisfactory either in perspective or in form, has limited the publications, and today in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (that is, the entire Republic with the exception of Slovakia) twenty-seven daily newspapers are published. The ten most important are published in Prague. They are the following:

| <u>Newspaper</u> | <u>Publisher</u> | <u>Circulation</u> |
|---|--|--------------------|
| "Rude Pravo" (The Red Right) | Czechoslovak Communist Party | 500,000 daily |
| "Svobodne Slovo" (The Free Word) | National Socialist Party | 300,000 daily |
| "Lidova Demokracie" (The People's Democracy) | People's Party | 185,000 daily |
| "Pravo Lidu" (The Right of the People) | Social Democrat Party | 190,000 daily |
| "Prace" (Work) | Revolutionary Syndicalist Movement (URO) | 250,000 daily |
| "Zemedske Noviny" (The Agricultural Daily) | National Union of Czech Agriculturalists | 120,000 daily |
| "Mlada Fronta" (The Youth Front) | National Union of Czech Youth | 80,000 daily |
| "Svobodne Ceskoslovensko" (Free Czechoslovakia) | Czechoslovak Army | 80,000 daily |
| "Svobodne Noviny" (The Free Daily) | Union of Cultural Organizations | 60,000 daily |
| "Narodni Odvobozeni" (National Liberation) | Czechoslovak Legionnaires' Guild | 40,000 daily |

In addition to the above Prague dailies, the various political parties publish several newspapers in the provinces.

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Newspapers Published by the Communist Party. The circulation figure, representing the combined total for the newspapers listed, is 200,000 copies daily.

| <u>Newspaper</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| "Revnost" (Equality) | Brno |
| "Nova Svoboda" (New Liberty) | Plsen |
| "Pravda" (Truth) | Moravska Ostrava |
| "Strazlidu" (The People's Guardian) | Olomouc |

Newspapers Published by the National Socialist Party. The circulation figure, representing the combined total for the newspapers listed, is 190,000 copies daily.

| <u>Newspaper</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|--|------------------|
| "Slovo Naroda" (The Voice of the People) | Brno |
| "Nove Slovo" (The New Voice) | Moravska Ostrava |
| "Svobodny Smer" (Free Route) | Plsen |

Newspapers Published by the People's Party. The circulation figure, representing the combined total for the newspapers listed, is 140,000 copies daily.

| <u>Newspaper</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|--|------------------|
| "Narodni Obroda" (National Renaissance) | Brno |
| "Hlas Lidove Demokracie" (The Voice of the People's Democracy) | Moravska Ostrava |
| "Osvozeny Nasinec" (We, the Free) | Olomouc |

Newspapers Published by the Social Democrat Party. The circulation figure, representing the combined total for the newspapers listed, is 180,000 copies daily.

| <u>Newspaper</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|---|------------------|
| "Novy Den" (The New Day) | Plsen |
| "Straz Severu" (The Guard of the North) | Liberec |
| "Cin" (Action) | Brno |
| "Ceskolovenska Demokracie" (Czechoslovak Democracy) | Moravska Ostrava |

Although the figures given above are the official figures, was told that they are exaggerated, especially in the case of newspapers published by the Communist Party. Moreover, many copies of Communist publications are not sold. Another example of exaggeration

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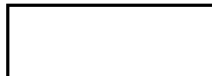
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in official figures is the case of "Lidova Demokracie" published by the People's Party. According to the editors themselves, the copies sold do not exceed 150,000 daily while the official figure given is 185,000 copies daily. The dailies are published every day except Monday. The price is 1.50 crowns on week days and two crowns on Sunday. As of 1 January 1946, regulations provided that newspapers were to be published with four to eight pages in the accepted format of Central Europe for the week-day editions, while the Sunday editions may have a maximum of twelve pages. It appears that the paper consumption is approximately equal to that of the year 1938. The circulation of the newspapers has been increased while the number of newspapers in existence has been decreased.

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